The latter consideration, I consider full of importance. The welfare, prosperity, peace of the country, are involved in it, or I am greatly in error. To it I shall principally direct my observations.

It is by no means my purpose, in reference to the title, to detain the committee by a minute or full examination of the subject. It has been exhausted already, in the hands of gentlemen far more competent to analyse it than myself. I mention it for the sake of order in my remarks, and because I desire briefly to refer to it, for the purpose of stating the conclusions which my mind has arrived at, in regard to the nature and extent of our title, rather than for the purpose of spreading out all the reasons which have produced these conclusions.

I entertain the opinion, then, Mr. Chairman, that by discovery, exploration, and settlement, (without adverting to the Spanish purchase,) my country has acquired an *indisputable*, and ought to enjoy an *undisputed* title to Oregon as far north as 49, and probably as far as 49½ degrees. An American citizen, Capt. Gray, was the first to explore the eastern coast of Queen Charlotte's, or Washington's island, situate between the 52d and 54th degrees north latitude; and I presume it may be said, without danger of successful contradiction, that an American citizen, Kendrick, "was the first person who sailed through the Strait of Fuca after its discovery by the Greek pilot in 1592."

Without pausing, however, to inquire into the extent, or effects of the discoveries and explorations here alluded to, I proceed to say, that in 1792 an American citizen, Capt. Gray, *did discover* the mouth of the Columbia river—that he entered it, and anchored in it, *ten miles above its mouth*—that he remained several days in this river, trading with the natives, and that this discovery was made at a period when all the British navigators entertained the opinion that no such river existed—and after Meares and Vancouver had both abandoned all farther search for it, as vain and useless—and after Vancouver had declared "*that no opening harbor, or place of refuge for vessels, was to be found between Cape Mendocino and the Strait of Fuca.*" The British plenipotentiaries, during the negotiation of 1826, admit that Capt. Gray, finding himself in the bay formed by the discharge of the waters of the Columbia into the Pacific, "*was the first to ascertain that this bay formed the outlet of a great river.*" When to this is added the exploration of Lewis and Clark in 1805, during which the Columbia was traced from its sources to its mouth, it will scarcely be doubted, by an American citizen, at least, that our title to so much of Oregon as is drained by this river is *indisputable*.

These discoveries have been followed by settlements, sufficiently prompt and extensive, to perfect and maintain the rights resulting from discovery. I have, therefore, concluded that our title to the valley of the Columbia is beyond dispute—that it is not only *the best*, as compared with the title of Great Britain, but that it is *now, the best on earth:* in short, that it is a *good* title; such an one as I would be willing to risk in an action of ejectment, and upon the *strength* of which I should expect to recover before any impartial tribunal, without reference to the *weakness* of my adversaries' claim.

But, Mr. Chairman, we have rights in the Oregon country beyond these; rights upon which I lay some stress; and which, I think, have not been fully appreciated by many gentlemen who have participated in this debate. I will briefly state them: